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AUTHOR Grotelueschen, Arden D.; Gooler, Dennis D.
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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that while evaluation means different things to different people, the focus is characteristically on what has been, or is being done. It is proposed that evaluation also be applied to things not yet done; that evaluation has a significant and continuous role in planning any educational program. Evaluation is seen as facilitating the fulfillment of the four basic functions of planning by (1) identifying program goals, (2) defining alternative means of attaining these goals, (3) indicating the possible consequences of selecting each alternative, and (4) providing data for the allocation of resources. Methods of operationalizing the preceding concepts, and procedures for determining priorities among goals and means are considered. The inclusion of this data into educational planning is discussed. (PR)

ROLE OF EVALUATION IN PLANNING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS¹

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Arden D. Grotelueschen
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dennis D. Gooler
Syracuse University

Evaluation means different things to different people. For example, it is judging the worth of a program (Scriven, 1967). It is describing a program as fully as possible (Stake, 1967). It is documenting how well program objectives are met (Tyler, 1942). It is providing useful information to decision-makers (Stufflebeam, 1969). It is all of these, and combinations of these, and more things besides. The characteristic common to each of these perceptions of evaluation is a focus on what has been done or what is presently being done.

We propose that evaluation also be applied to things not yet done. The perceptions of evaluation suggested above are not inappropriate to our proposal. But, in this paper we will argue, as Moynihan (1970, p. 14) did, for "evaluation in advance." To do so, we feel, requires a more-than-usual reliance upon judgmental data.

Why Plan?

We'd like to talk about the planning of education programs--both for short- and long-range futures. Programs in education range from the very small (e.g., a student with a programmed text) to the very large (e.g., the college system of a state). A program exists over some period of time. Someone tries to accomplish something during that time. A program may be defined by the people in it, by the goals it seeks to accomplish, or by the reason for which it exists. A program is a distinguishable unit, with people, goals, and methods.

Programs generally exist to take care of needs we have identified. Ideally, we identify needs that education has a responsibility to meet, and we devise programs that meet these needs. We might arrange Program A to meet Need One, Need Two, and Need Three. Program B would attend to Needs Four, Five, Six and Seven, and so forth until we had covered all needs with programs.

Our ability to identify needs, however, is not keenly developed. Consequently, we may have no program that attends to Need Two, or Need Five or Need Seven. We may not even know those needs exist. Furthermore, upon examination, we discover that Program A is not satisfying all of Need One, or Three, or Four. There may be a multitude of reasons

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for this failure: not enough money, or time, or experience, or personnel, or training. Whatever the reason, Program A does not make it. Program B may not fare much better. We realize that present programs may not be meeting present needs, either perceived or real.

But suppose we did identify all needs. And suppose that all programs did satisfactorily meet all of these needs. Would this obviate the need for program planning? Emphatically no, since we cannot assume that present needs will remain constant. Need One may be met and disappear. Need Two undergoes alteration, resulting in a similar but not identical need. A series of new needs may arise, generated by changes in the social or educational scene, or by changes brought about by the program itself. The present does not remain unchanged.

Adding further complexity to the situation is the inevitability of change within programs. Programs have elements of people, goals, methods, and time. These may not remain constant: A teacher leaves; spelling recitation gives way to discussion of the origin and use of words. Thus Program A may not be an appropriate means for meeting new or transformed needs. There must be a realization that present programs may not be responsive to future needs.

The rationale for our emphasis on the need for planning rests upon three basic observations. First the speed of change of the social scene is a more relevant concern to educators than ever before. Many time-honored traditions, ideas, and expectations are losing favor with the young, and are being questioned by others. The speed of change--it is rapidly accelerating--necessitates a different style of planning, a style we've not recognized before.

Further, we're told that the amount of knowledge available to us is increasing at a geometric rate. There is more now known and more to know than ever before. Finally, because of conditions wrought by increased knowledge and accelerating change, man has to be much more psychologically and socially adaptable than ever before. If man is to survive, he has to be psychologically, intellectually, and socially fit. These observations have significance for planning education programs.

Functions of Planning

Educational program planning serves four basic functions. Planning results in the identification of potential program *goals*. Goals of some kind exist even if systematic planning is not carried out. However, planning seeks to sharpen goals. Goals may be stated in broad terms (students will become good citizens), or they may be stated specifically and behaviorally (the seventh grade student will be able to identify four reference books). Planning enables the program manager (and his staff) to select particular goals, from a universe of possible goals, that seem appropriate for his program. "Good" planning also attends to changing goals as the program unfolds.

Planning should assist the program director in defining alternative *means* for reaching potential goals. Too often we make decisions based on very limited knowledge of our alternatives. If we wish to instruct children in the values of our society, we should consider the alternative means. Reading literature produced by our predecessors and contemporaries is an alternative. Attending to the mass media is another, but are there others? Can we make use of technology? Can we utilize programmed instruction? Should more emphasis be given to the education of the parents of these children? How else can we reach this goal? To be sure, the planning process must include feasibility checks, but wise planning necessitates that we have an array of alternatives before us.

Just as planning should identify and define alternative means-to-ends, so should planning define some possible *consequences* of selecting each alternative. A common practice is to choose an alternative, implement it, and then analyze the consequences of that choice. We can no longer enjoy the luxury of this procedure. In terms of cost alone (not merely dollars and cents), we need to be as fully apprised as possible of the consequences of our actions before we act. The plan implies identifying consequences, even though this is not a simple task. We think evaluation could be especially relevant to this problem.

Planning has a direct bearing on the *allocation of resources*. As alternative actions are considered, the resources required to implement each alternative must be considered also. What would it cost to use programmed instruction? What resources will be needed to accomplish a certain goal? New resources may be desired. Planning leads to a more efficient and effective allocation of resources, as systematic planning minimizes haphazard expenditures of funds and personnel.

Functions of Evaluation in Planning

Traditionally, evaluation has sought to determine the extent to which students in a program achieve goals set for that program. In our view of evaluation and planning, evaluation is broader than this. It should be pointed out here that the traditional use of evaluation remains an important component in the planning process. Description of goals and assessments of attempts to achieve those goals are necessary. Needs assessment is, in part, a measure of the discrepancy between desired outcomes and things as they are. To determine the discrepancy, we need somehow to measure things as they are. We contend, however, that evaluation has tended to emphasize too heavily a preciseness of measurement of present and past events, and in so doing has forfeited possibilities for more futuristic thought. We believe evaluation can play a wider role in planning.²

²Much of the discussion about program operation has assumed goals to be need based. (See, for example, Stufflebeam's [1969] discussion of context evaluation.) We contend that goals may also be preference based. That is, certain goals may be desired by various groups or individuals.

We have suggested four functions of program planning. Our broad view of evaluation suggests two basic functions of *evaluation* in planning: the examination of goals, and the examination of alternative means of achieving those goals, together with the potential consequences of those means.

Too often, program goals are regarded as constants. Those who look at a program tend to consider ways the program implementation could be changed, not whether the goals of the program are appropriate. We contend that goals should be examined--their quality and their appropriateness ought to be assessed. This idea is not new: Scriven (1967), for example, made a strong argument for the examination of goals. Evaluation can seek to develop criteria for goal inclusion, to examine the relationships among goals, and, even more basically, to discover what people mean when they propose a certain goal.

Not only should evaluation consider the quality and appropriateness of stated (or implicit) goals, but evaluation ought to delineate alternative goals. A goal of the local school might be to get parents to the school. Might an alternative goal be to get the school to the parents? What we are striving to accomplish through our program might be considered in relation to possible achievements through different programs with different goals. What are our alternatives? Is there a pool of goals from which we can select?

A discussion of goals will often eventuate in a discussion of priorities. Which goals are most important? Given that we cannot accomplish all things with our limited resources, how do we determine the goals to pursue? In program planning, the question of goal priority is critical.

What do different groups with interests in a particular education program think the goals for that program should be? Do students have different priorities than the teachers? What of parents, and community members? What are their educational priorities? Do priorities change over time? Are our education programs sensitive to the priorities of those involved in the program?

In an earlier paper (Cooler and Grotelueschen, in press), we encouraged, as have others, the curriculum developer to consider various "audiences." We think curriculum developers should be held accountable for (to report, explain, or justify) decisions they make. The question of educational priorities is related to how a group or individual will consider program accountability.

Any educational program tends to touch a variety of people, in a variety of ways, at a variety of times. These various groups can be viewed as audiences who come with various biases and demands, public and private concerns, and motives of assorted legitimacies: Each of these "pockets of persuasion" may serve its notice of accountability to the program planner or administrator. The parent has some expectations

as to what his child should be able to do. The taxpayer sees much money being spent in the school, and wonders if that money is being used most efficiently. Eighth graders wonder if they will be able to compete in high school. The amount of "clout" these audiences possess in serving that notice is not at question here; the reality of their existence is. The manner in which the planner must account for the program will differ according to who is raising the questions, what those questions are, and when they are raised.

We suggest that the program planner spend part of his time identifying audiences, "pockets of potential persuasion." Furthermore, it is not enough merely to acknowledge the existence of different audiences. Judgments made by these audiences about the goals selected for a program should be considered by the administrator in his decision-making. The administrator, or the planner, may be able to uncover (not by second guessing but by direct inquiry) the questions these groups will be asking, the claims they will be making, the axes they seem to want to grind. Armed with that information, the administrator, or planner, can determine what kinds of data should be ready for use in response to potential questions. Perhaps more important, the data can be used as developmental input; it can exert an influence on what is developed. Program directors cannot follow suggestions made by all audiences, nor should they. Suggestions may be in direct opposition to each other. However, by considering possible suggestions and possible demands, the administrator can determine, before the fact, what the consequences of not attending to a particular suggestion or group might be. He need not yield only to those who speak the loudest; he may not follow the demands of audiences. He does need to know what people want and think, if only to know better how he is to report, explain, or justify what he intends to do and how he intends to do it.

Evaluation by identifying questions, groups, and data available, enables the administrator to confront reality nose-to-nose. In a democratic, pluralistic society such as ours, we cannot allow a few knowledgeable professionals to decide without serious consultation with other publics, issues of importance to the school and society. The question is: how can we best provide an educational commodity responsive to all who will be affected by it, and how can the educator explain that commodity in a manner that is understandable to the consumer?

In addition to examining goals, we would argue that evaluation should seek to identify alternative means to accomplish the goals a program seeks. This is not an easy task. The identification and structuring of alternative means to ends have been hindered by our preoccupation with attempts to get precise measurement of what has already happened. Such attempts require large commitments of time and resources, and consequently, little effort is expended on considering alternative ways to doing things.

The role of evaluation in planning might well be to gather approximations of what has previously happened, and to identify alternative means to ends, based on those approximations. Planning does not and cannot wait until all evidence is in. Plans for next year's programs are laid well before this year has expired. Traditional evaluation or research data has come in too late and has been too narrowly conceived to be of much use to the planner. Evaluators must learn how to approximate conditions and outcomes. Evaluation, we think, should make projections. From those projections will grow plans for the future, but these projections do not necessarily need to reflect the images of the past. Little of the past may be generalizable.

When we offer alternative means to given ends, we are obliged to project possible consequences of selecting those alternatives: "If you utilize these means, you might reasonably expect these consequences." For example, if we use Program X in the 12th grade, your children will probably be more interested in vocational placement, but will emerge caring less about the fine arts. In addition, you may need to expect to retrain many of your teachers. Our present evaluation technology can be useful in projecting possible consequences. We've made some efforts to examine outcomes when certain activities occur in a particular setting. A great deal more thinking and projecting consequences is necessary, however.

Evaluation has not always been viewed so broadly. The history of evaluation reveals a growing plea by many for the legitimation of a variety of data, methodologies, and responsibilities under the name evaluation. The development of evaluation as an independent entity is marked by innumerable subtle differences among those who regard themselves as evaluators, with respect to what evaluation is or ought to do. Those subtleties are probably of interest only to evaluators. The not-so-subtle differences among evaluation schools are of potential interest to those who must cope with evaluation as a part of planning.

Evaluation is continuous and informal. Buying a car, selecting a school, determining the relative merits and trade-offs of attending the parent-teacher meeting represent evaluative efforts. So does the decision to manufacture Edsels. And to stop. Evaluation is monitoring your existence in your society.

Evaluation has been viewed as an appendage to the operation of a program, as opposed to an integral part of it. We would argue that evaluation must be integrated into program planning and operation. Evaluation must begin early; it must monitor; it must project.

So what have we said about evaluation and planning? We've indicated that planning, always an important component in the operation of a program, may need to assume new methodologies if it is to function efficiently in a rapidly changing society. We've said we're uncomfortable with our present ability to identify needs, or to attend to all those needs. The

specification of alternative goals, or means, or consequences, is an important aspect of planning. No program can do all things; priorities must be determined. Adequate planning, we think, leads to more efficient and effective allocation of resources.

Evaluation has traditionally focused on the past. Evaluation has meant standardized tests and grades and accountability. We think it still means this, but it also means much more. Evaluation plays a role in planning by examining goals and means--future goals and means. We've argued that evaluation can approximate conditions and outcomes of the past, and, based in part on those approximations, can project to the future. We would opt for less effort expended to obtain precise measurement, and more effort to structuring alternatives for the future. We recognize a trade-off: mistakes may occur if we don't know why something done previously worked or didn't work. We are in danger of repeating mistakes if we only approximate the past in attempts to study the future. Wardrop (1971) suggests that an important concern of educational evaluation is explanation--the determination of the most probable cause for a phenomenon. We contend, however, that explanation is extremely time consuming, and that decisions about programs may need to be made before explanation is complete.

The apparent broadness with which we view the function of evaluation in planning may cause some of our colleagues to feel we've been talking about something other than evaluation. Is the structuring of alternative goals and means and consequences a measurement of student outcomes, or an assessment of the worth of something, or the collection of useful information for the decision-maker? Perhaps not. Perhaps evaluation is not the most appropriate term for the procedures and purposes we are proposing. We will search for a more appropriate term.

We need to look at programs with a fish-eye lens. By so doing, we can see what's behind us, but then we also have a wide view of what may be before us.

In the next section of this paper, we'd like to talk about how we might operationalize some of these ideas.

We will stress the importance of ascertaining alternative goals and means. Further, we will suggest procedures to determine priorities among potential goals and means. Finally, the inclusion of these data into educational program planning will be discussed.

The Importance of Alternatives

*It is a tale,
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

Macbeth, Act V, Scene VI

There are many such tales. And most of us fear that our ideas may be so described. Those involved with the planning of education programs

must be prepared to risk this Shakespearean evaluation of their ideas, however, they must also be willing to examine alternatives to what is presently being done.

Buy why? Aren't the people with a vested interest in an education program (teachers, parents, kids) in agreement with the goals and means of a program? Most likely not, particularly if that program is yet to be designed. People have different viewpoints about what a new program might accomplish. They also have different ideas about means to be used to accomplish a program's goals.

One role of evaluation in the planning of a program is to describe the goals constituents think should be pursued in a program, as well as the variety of goals seen as desirable by people not directly involved in a particular program. Evaluation is not obliged to derive consensus. Divergence may be highly desirable: we think it is essential.

It is easy to view our society and our programs from a narrow perspective, and it is possible to remain comfortable with that view if we are never forced to consider alternatives to the traditionally held goals. We have argued that change is constantly accelerating. Our perception of the world as we have always viewed it may not be a valid perception of the world that now is. We think the individual who considers many goals may be more likely to examine what he is now doing in terms of what he could be doing, than an individual not confronted with these alternative goals.

Perhaps even more important is the process of habitually scrutinizing alternative goals. This involves a continual examination of goals, programs, and society.

Ziegler (1969) has suggested that planning is the traditional method for attempting to impose some order on the future. The future may be similar to the past in many ways. The future is not the past, however. Given the present and probable future rate of change, it is more and more unlikely that the future will be a replication of the past. The alternative goals we delineate must be indicative of that which is and will be as opposed to that which was. We are suggesting that less emphasis in planning should be on the past.

Goals and Priorities

Goals have been held, discussed, and debated since the beginning of man. They exist at many levels. There are personal goals, professional goals, and goals held to be "for the good of society." Goals range from the highly general (to lead a productive life) to the highly specific (the student will be able to name the Presidents). We have been urging planners to consider a wide variety of possible goals. The array of possibilities should reflect the specific and the general, as well as the insiders' and the outsiders' views. And the goals must be stated in such a way that their intent is clear to the people who will judge them.

What should an education program do? A response to this question implies priorities. How do we structure an education program when it must operate under constraints, making impossible the pursual of some of those goals we recognize as good and useful? Priorities are the assignment of relative worth to two or more functions or ideas. Priorities imply choice. To have a choice, we must have a number of goals to choose from.

Priorities are formulated and operationalized constantly. We do it everyday, mostly implicitly. Sometimes explicitly. We decide to go to the store, as opposed to staying home. We select a particular television program. We choose certain food. But we are urging the education planner to make more explicit the implicit. We're asking that people think about priorities. In the next section, we'd like to describe how information about goal priorities might be collected and used.

Profiles of Goal Priorities

A number of techniques may be used to collect information about the priority various people assign to particular goals of education programs. Some of these techniques will be illustrated below.

Sorting. Downey (1960) used a technique called the Q-Sort to determine how important 16 educational goals were rated by a variety of people.

Using this method, the investigator asks the respondent to sort a series of possible goals into categories according to perceived importance of each goal. The respondent is allowed to put only a certain number of goal statements into each category. If there were 16 goals, as Downey had, the categories would be as follows:

Most Important					Least Important	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐		
			☐			

Each box represents one goal statement. Thus, the respondent must choose one goal as most important, two goals as next important, and so forth.

The average ranking assigned to each goal by the group of people being questioned can be computed. On the basis of these rankings, the entire group of goal statements can be ranked for each group of people. The results may be plotted as a profile. Downey developed a profile for responses to his 16 goals, as illustrated in Figure 1. Another way of presenting the information would be simply to list the goals according to average ranking.

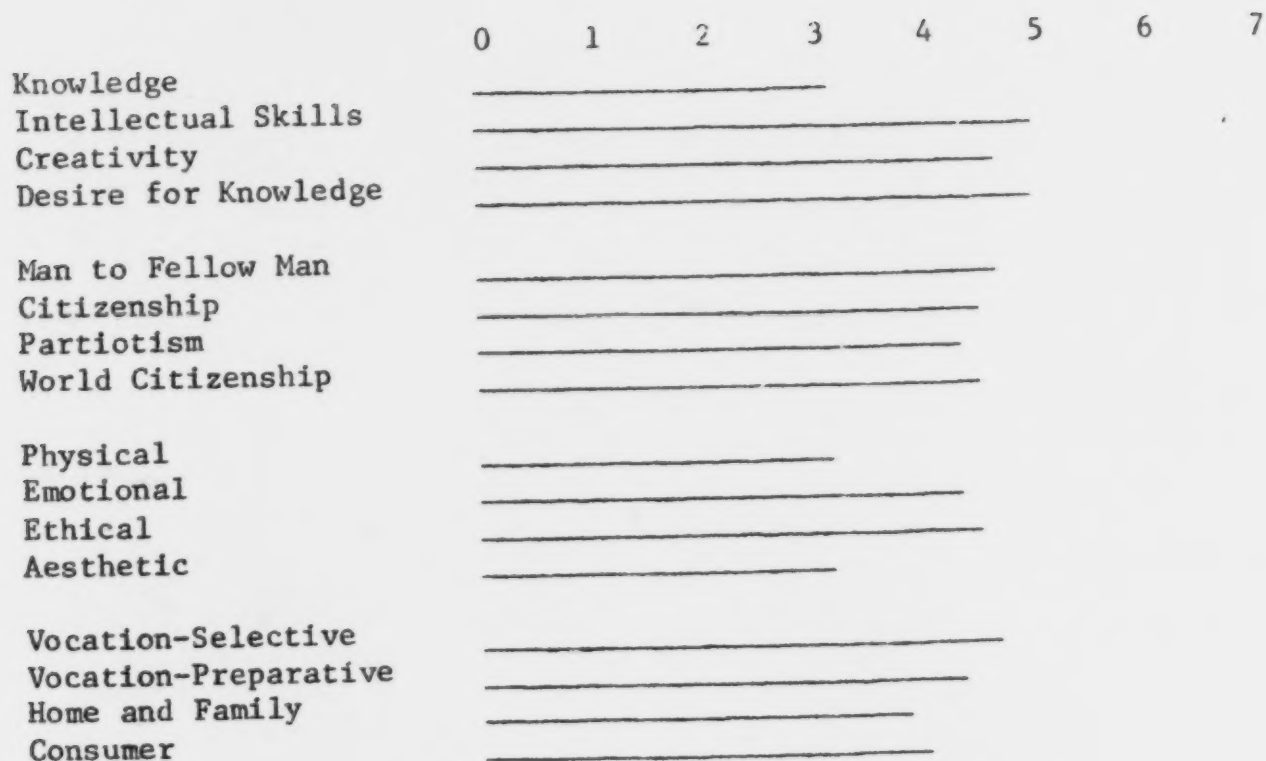


Figure 1: Relative Importance of the High School Task Elements.
(Taken from Downey, 1960, p. 34.)

The importance of divergency in goal statements is again apparent. To know what people regard as important, we need to know how they will rank a variety of goals.

Rating. Respondents might be asked to rate a particular goal on a continuum of importance. Consider the following as an example of a format for asking about the importance of possible goals of a secondary school program:

Below are some goals for a secondary school. How important do you think each of these goals should be?

This is a goal the school should:

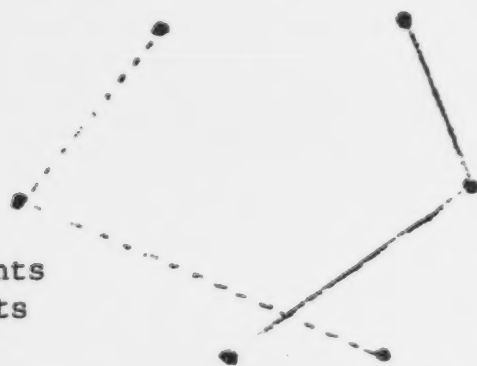
Carefully avoid pursuing	Consider relatively unimportant	Consider relatively important	Consider extremely important
--------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

To provide the student training and placement in the vocation of his choice.

To foster the development of the student as an enlightened consumer.

To foster in the student emotional stability and good mental health.

..... Students
..... Parents



A mean rating could be calculated for each of the goals and a profile drawn for a particular group or individual. These ratings could also be plotted for various groups as shown above.

The investigator may wish to note those goals consistently rated as very important, and those goals people feel should not be pursued in the program. Frequently he will choose to compare the profiles of various groups.

Allocation of resources. It is possible that an individual, confronted with 10 or 17 or 62 goals for an education program, might rate all of the goals as "very important." In the rating technique outlined above the respondent is not forced to rank goals, as he was in the Q-Sort exercise.

Resources are finite, however. No program can accomplish everything. One way of gaining some insight into what people think is important is to ask them to allocate these finite resources among goals.

One way of allocating resources is to ask people what percentage of the total amount of money available for a given education program should be allocated to pursuing each of a number of goals. The respondent might also be asked how he would allocate time to pursuing certain goals. Those goals receiving greater amounts of time or money resources would be considered more important than goals receiving fewer resources.

Suppose an individual were given a series of goals potentially appropriate for the education program of a certain community. The individual might be asked to respond to an item such as the following:

Resources, both time and money, are often not as plentiful as we would like them to be. Educators try to pursue as many goals as they can with the time and money available. Suppose the school were required to cut back drastically on its program. What educational goals are most important for the school, if they are not able to pursue all of them? Below, list the number of the goal that best completes each statement.

If the community had enough resources to pursue:

- 1 goal, it should pursue Goal _____
- 2 goals, it should pursue the previous goal and . . Goal _____
- 3 goals, it should pursue the previous goals and . . Goal _____
- 4 goals, it should pursue the previous goals and . . Goal _____

The strength of resource allocation as an indicator of priorities lies with the familiarity most people have with some kind of resource allocation. Most of us have to decide how we will spend our time and/or our money. We have learned some things about manipulating both kinds of resources. (Note: See Gooler [1971] and Wilder [1968] for more detailed examples of priority data collection.)

Two points should be made concerning the brief description of methods we have outlined for collecting priority information. First, the usefulness of priority information will be largely dependent on the quality and quantity of the goal statements people are asked to respond to. If respondents do not have many alternatives to choose from, the investigator may not obtain as complete a picture of what people think is important as he might if people were required to respond to a variety of possible goals.

Second, we feel that the most complete representation of what people think is important may include a look at priorities from several perspectives. An individual may order a set of goals one way when asked to talk about those goals in terms of importance; he may order those same goals differently when asked to allocate resources to those goals. No one ordering may be more or less accurate than another, but are rather different. It is important to look at the differences as well as the commonalities.

We have suggested one kind of relationship that may exist among goals: a rank ordering relationship. Other relationships may also exist. For example, some goals may be related in that the inclusion of one goal assumes the exclusion of another goal. Goals may be grouped together according to some common base. Thus, one group of goals may be considered more important than some other group of goals. Each of these relationships may be important to examine.

Using Priority Information in Program Planning

Our brief discussion of methods of collecting information about goal priorities has been, at best, suggestive of ways of collecting priority information. But, how is the information to be used once it has been collected?

A study of priorities will reveal concerns and disagreement among various groups of people as to what education ought to be doing. The program planner can use this information in several ways. First, he may plan programs that will attend to those things people think are important. Second, where he detects disagreements he may plan ways to lessen that disagreement. He may need to supply additional information to the disagreeing groups. He also might enlist the aid of advocates to clarify particular program goals about which there is disagreement.

At best, knowledge of where disagreements may occur will enable the planner to lay a careful basis for the implementation of a program so that its goals might be achieved. At worst, the planner will know where he might expect resistance to the implementation of a certain program. To be sure, the information obtained about goal priorities allows the planner to seek means for actively reflecting or obtaining program support.

We have said that evaluation too often looks exclusively at the past. It is possible to collect judgments about the worth of possible program goals before those goals are actually implemented. We can manipulate situations or constraints, and can monitor how people will order these goals given different constraints. The situations or constraints we utilize may reflect our best understanding of what the future will look like. For example, suppose greater federal aid to education will become a reality in the near future. If people are told that additional resources might be available, how will they order their education goals? And will that ordering be different if, instead of increased resources, there is actually a decrease in available resources? Which goals are rated important in each of these situations?

Knowledge of goal priorities held by various kinds of people does not tell the program planner how a program is to be made operational. Knowledge of goal priorities has been emphasized in this paper as a useful means of determining goals which people feel ought to be pursued. Similarly, knowledge of priorities might be useful in determining possible means for obtaining program goals.

People may hold the same goals but disagree as to the best means of achieving them.³ The "experts" may regard particular means to an end as the most pedagogically sound; others involved in the program, however, may find those means unacceptable. The program planner may wish to consider information about means priorities, once he has established which goals will be pursued in a particular education program.

Techniques similar to those used in determining goal priorities might be used to determine whether a particular mean to an end might be seen as acceptable or unacceptable to various kinds of people. The planner may want to consider means according to an "acceptable" or "unacceptable" dichotomy. He may simply ask people whether a particular means to an end is acceptable to them. Again, the "experts" may say that, of these acceptable means, Mean A is more appropriate than Mean B or C. Such a distinction, however, may be too fine for most groups with which the planner might deal.

In Conclusion

We may be guilty of confusing, rather than clarifying, the issue of education program planning. We have sought to establish a case for considering priorities as an important aspect of planning. We have argued

³Stufflebeam (1969) has suggested that input evaluation should result in an analysis of alternative procedural designs in terms of potential costs and benefits. In addition, we argue, the analysis may need to include statements of how acceptable various means-to-ends are to various kinds of people.

that it is important to consider a variety of goals for any program. We have suggested, and only briefly, how information about priorities might be collected, and how that information might be used by the planner.

If the planner is to do what we have suggested, he will make some trade-offs. To study priorities takes time, and money, and effort. What are the pay-offs for education? We are not sure yet. We speculate that there are pay-offs. Most important, we think, the study of what goals and means people feel ought to be pursued may orient planning toward the future rather than toward the past.

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